



Executive Officer's Statement

May 18, 2006

Governor Highlights Crime Victim Issues

Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger took three significant actions on behalf of crime victims during Crime Victims' Rights Week.

- On April 24, 2006, the Governor issued Executive Order S-05-06 announcing the creation of the position of Crime Victim Advocate within the Governor's office. Once appointed, the crime victim advocate will review state victim service programs to identify the needs of crime victims, propose ways to enhance services, and eliminate duplication of administering and overseeing grants and contracts to local victim service organizations. The crime victim advocate is also charged with short and long term strategic planning for victim services in California.
- On April 27 the Governor marked the collection of more than \$100 million for crime victim restitution and the record gains in victims' restitution payments statewide. He was joined by district attorneys, including VCGCB Member Michael Ramos, San Bernardino County District Attorney; probation officers; and crime victims and their families.
- The Governor also signed a proclamation officially naming April 23 to 29, 2006, Crime Victims' Rights Week in California.

VCGCB Participates in National Crime Victims' Rights Week Activities Across the State

Communities across California recognized Crime Victims' Rights Week, April 23-29, with diverse events scheduled throughout the week. Nearly one hundred members of the VCGCB staff joined crime victims, their families, and victim advocates at the 17th Annual Victims' March on the Capitol on April 24 in Sacramento. Members of the VCGCB staff and Executive Team participated in other events as well, including the following:

- Ribbons of Hope Crime Victims' Awareness Luncheon in Nevada County
- Victims' Rights Awards Luncheon in Riverside County
- Los Angeles Run/Walk for Victims' Rights
- 7th Annual Victims' Dedication Ceremony in Monterey County
- District Attorney's Justice Awards Ceremony in San Francisco
- Victims' Rights Luncheon in San Joaquin County
- Citizens of Courage Luncheon in San Diego County
- Victims' Memorial Quilt unveiling in Tulare County
- Sacramento County District Attorney Outstanding Citizen Awards
- California Attorney General's Office of Crime Victim Services Annual Crime Victims' Conference.

These events underscored the importance of taking time each year to honor crime victims' stories. This year's theme, "Strength in Unity," also afforded an opportunity for those of us who assist crime victims, whether as advocates, within the compensation program, or within the criminal justice system, to listen to victims' experiences and to recommit ourselves to creating the best possible network of victim services.

VCGCB Releases 2006 Strategic Plan

On May 4, 2006, the VCCGB Executive Team issued the 2006 Strategic Plan. The new mission statement of the VCGCB is "to serve our claimants and stakeholders through effective assistance and timely resolution of claims." The four strategic goals outlined in the plan are:

- Excellence in customer service
- Continued funding stability
- Excellence in information technology
- Positive workplace environment

Employees and stakeholders contributed to the plan over the last several months through a series of meetings, interviews, and focus groups to talk about the VCGCB's strengths and challenges. An all-staff meeting allowed each employee the opportunity to contribute ideas, and the VCGCB executive management team finalized the plan at a two-day meeting. The team also created a detailed operation plan that will enable the VCGCB to achieve the strategic goals and objectives identified in the Strategic Plan.

The Strategic Plan is available on the VCGCB website at www.vcgcb.ca.gov.

VCGCB Updates

- Victim Compensation Program Manager Afzal Rashid attended the 6th Annual San Diego Family Justice Center Conference in San Diego, April 26-28. The conference offered presentations from law enforcement, victim advocates, and mental health providers on a variety of topics, including information on teams, promising practices, investigations, and prosecutions in the areas of sexual assault, domestic violence, cyber stalking, and human trafficking.
- VCGCB staff members attended the 42nd Annual California Association of Marriage and Family Therapists on May 4 -7 in Palm Springs. Staff attended workshops offered in the areas of mental health practices and methods, as well as psychological and traumatic disorders. The VCGCB provided information about our services at a booth at the conference.
- On May 5 VCGCB staff members from the Quality Assurance Mental Health Section and the Joint Powers Section gave a presentation at the Santa Clara County 24th Annual Child Abuse Symposium in San Jose.
- Policy and Training staff members presented a two-hour overview of the Victim Compensation Program at the CDAA Victim Advocate Training Institute on April 21st. Approximately 70 advocates attended.
- Policy and Training staff members presented training to Department of Victim Witness Assistance employees in San Diego on May 2.
- On May 12th, Policy and Training staff members conducted training for 30 advocates for Tulare, Kings, and Kern Counties in Visalia.
- Restitution Unit staff members conducted four trainings in April and May:
 - 30 Santa Clara County Department of Revenue staff members attended training presented on April 13.
 - Approximately 150 probation officers attended the Criminal Restitution in California certified training presented in San Diego on April 17 to 19
 - 35 probation officers attended the certified training when it was offered in San Mateo on May 3.
 - Eleven deputy district attorneys attended the Restitution Law training offered in Stanislaus County on April 28.